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Original Communications.

CLINICAL LECTURE.

Delivered at the Montreal General Hospital February 23rd 1886.

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ECZEMA.

GENTLEMEN,—The woman now before you came to the Out-door Clinic yesterday, complaining of the rash on the back of her neck, which I now show you. She has had it for some time, and its irritation has been the source of much annoyance to her. The disease is eczema, which may be acute or chronic, and has several sub-divisions,—usually four: 1. Eczema Erythematosum. 2. Eczema Vesiculosum. 3. Eczema Papulosum. 4. Eczema Pustulosum. The case now before you is of the first variety, viz., Eczema Erythematosum. It is a distinct inflammation of the skin, characterized by a somewhat inflammatory surface—some infiltration, swelling and itching, and terminating in desquamation or shedding of the skin. It is perhaps the most common variety which we meet with, and has a strong tendency to become chronic. Slight moisture is, upon rare occasions present, but as a rule the disease remains dry throughout. The disease is curable, and the means used must be both constitutional and local. In cases of not very long duration saline aperients, as sulphate of magnesia, cream of tartar and Rochelle salts, should be given. When the disease occurs in children, hubarb is especially recommended. Diuretics are also

advised, as acetate of potash and liq. potassæ. Various mineral waters, as the Saratoga, Vichy and Carlsbad, are beneficial. In worn-out, debilitated subjects, iron, quinine, and cod liver oil, are very valuable. Arsenic should be given in very small doses—ii. gr. three times a day after meals. Local treatment must always be followed. In the variety now before you the following lotion will be prescribed, and I believe will act beneficially:

R. Acid carbolic, ʒ ss; glycerinæ gtt. xv; alcoholis, ʒ i; aquæ, ʒ iv. M. ft. lotio. Apply several times a day by means of a small sponge.

This patient, gentlemen, possesses a double interest to us, inasmuch as while coming to get relief for one disease our attention is attracted to a second disease from which she is suffering. Although the disease is considered a surgical one it is rarely bad enough to fall into the hands of an operating surgeon. Most generally the physician is called upon to treat it, and for this reason I draw your attention to it. As she bares her neck you will notice a distinct swelling over the front of the throat—that is over the situation of the thyroid gland. This disease is known as goitre or bronchocele, and is much more common in women than in men. In fact during all my experience I can only recall two or three cases in males, while I have seen many hundreds in females. The cause is thought to have some connection with the locality in which the patients live. It is said that low, moist situations favor it, while high, airy places are exempt. In this city it was very common some years ago, and is still often met with on the flat which commences where this hospital stands, and which ends at the foot of the hill—which terminates at Sherbrooke street. It was believed to have been